

Memorandum

To: Planning Commission

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Date: June 10, 2016

Subject: **Downtown Parking – Presentation and Discussion of Code, Administration, and Planning**

MEETING PURPOSE

At the Planning Commission's June 15, 2016 meeting, staff from Development Services and from Economic Development and Transportation Demand Management will provide an overview presentation for the Commission's information and questions regarding:

- Parking regulations, administration, and procedures;
- Opportunities for alternative to parking standards;
- Parking studies, transportation management plans, and implementation;
- Community comments and developer requests;
- City Council's direction regarding parking management;
- Brief summary of 2014 parking study results; and
- Near and long-term parking management plans.

This presentation and discussion is specific to the Downtown and is for the purpose of providing context for the Commission's discussion and recommendation regarding stakeholder comments about parking standards that apply within the Historic Core as well as other parking-related topics for the Historic Core.

BACKGROUND

A portion of the scope of the proposed Zoning Code amendments for the Historic Core relate to on-site and on-street parking. This includes stakeholder comments regarding small lot residential density as part of package 1, parking ratios as part of package 2 and the upcoming continuation of the Commission's discussion of amendments to the Zoning Code Pedestrian System Map for Leary Way.

In preparation for staff's presentation regarding Downtown parking, the Commission also identified on June 8 several questions and topics of interest:

- Programmatic response to and planning strategies regarding Sound Transit's ST3 accelerated construction timeline;
- Planning in the Downtown for driverless cars (as a shuttle service) such as siting pick-up/drop-off locations, queueing areas, and remote parking opportunities;
- Fee-based parking management and relationship to community interest in additional parking supply; and
- Construction parking management strategies in Downtown.

Downtown Parking – Vision, Administration, Comments and Council Direction

The following is provided for the Commission's reference regarding current Downtown and Old Town parking standards and subsequent review of the Technical Committee's May 27, 2016 recommendations regarding the Historic Core. The presentation slides, Attachment A, also provide information including as follow up to the Commission's June 8 discussion.

- **Downtown Vision and Parking Policy**

The vision for Downtown is that of a thriving center for residential and commercial activity. Downtown is seen as an outstanding place to work, shop, live and recreate and as a destination for many in Redmond and in the region. Particularly regarding transportation, Downtown includes facilities making it easy to walk, bicycle, use transit or drive. Many visitors walk or take transit to get to their destinations or park in one of the conveniently located garages. The comprehensive transportation system provides convenient and effective transportation alternatives together with improved operations.

- **Downtown Parking Management Components**

Components of parking management in the Downtown include Zoning Code standards for and administration of off-street and on-street parking, opportunities for public parking, and promotion of alternative modes of transportation such as by bike and bus. The majority of the components for Downtown are also described at www.redmond.gov/parking.

Staff regularly works with developers, business owners, residents, and visitors to Downtown to plan for, promote, and respond to parking management questions and concerns. Principally, management strategies help facilitate Redmond's vision for Downtown as a vibrant urban center, as well as to help influence single-occupant vehicle (SOV) mode split. Management also includes addressing the needs of site-specific and short-term trends such as contractor and event parking. Staff meets frequently with contractors, businesses, and residents, offers support and tools for mitigating variable parking conditions, and provides regular email updates to maintain and strengthen communication, particularly in response to conditions that can change quite often and over the short-term.

- Regulations and Flexibility

The Zoning Code calls for off-street parking based on the zone in which a development is located and based on specific on-site uses. For example, a mixed-use building would be required to provide off-street parking for residential, office, and general sales and services uses, as they apply to the site. For housing, requirements are based on the residential unit type and include provisions for guests. Other use-based requirements are based on the amount of gross floor area allocated to individual uses. Parking ratios are generally designed based on regional surveys of similar uses, discussion with agencies and developers, and study and observation of similar uses in the same context such as comparing parking for residential suites in Redmond's Downtown to parking for similar housing types in other, similarly-sized downtown centers.

Developers may choose from a variety of provisions for flexibility. In the Old Town, for example, the Technical Committee may waive parking requirements for restaurant uses (less than 1,000 square feet GFA) that are located in and intended to serve the occupants of an office building or that are located within 100 feet of a promenade or Downtown park. Curbside parking along the site of development may be counted for up to 25 percent of the required parking for residential uses.

The Code Administrator may also approve alternative minimum parking requirements for specific uses within individual developments when an expertly prepared parking study demonstrates that adequate parking will serve the uses and avoid impacting other uses in the vicinity. If a study does not demonstrate adequate supply, a developer may propose implementing and recording a Transportation Management Program for the site. This program is for the purpose of establishing approaches and monitoring conditions to effectively reduce parking demand.

Parking may also be provided off site of the development. This supply must be located within 600 feet of the site and secured by an easement. The Code Administrator may approve alternatives to this requirement. Cooperative parking facilities and in-lieu parking fees provide additional mechanisms for reducing off-street parking requirements. These are reviewed by the Technical Committee against criteria defined by the Zoning Code.

Parking requirements must also be met for new uses proposed in existing structures and are reviewed as part of proposed tenant improvements. Some uses, particularly when changing from existing to new uses, extraordinary parking demands may be warranted, for example for a karate studio proposed at a former retail space. When parking requirements are not met by existing conditions, the additional amount of required parking must be found elsewhere, within 600 feet of the site. If not possible to locate parking in an amount that meets the requirement, the proposed use would be denied.

- 2008 and 2014 Parking Studies

The primary objective of the 2008 Parking Study was to identify key issues regarding parking, transportation, and access in the Downtown and respective impacts on the continuing economic vitality of the Downtown. Recommendations described a clear, flexible and consensus-based parking management plan that would support and facilitate Redmond's long-term vision. Primary recommendations of the study were maximizing

the City's existing parking resources and assuring cost effective solutions for parking access. In general, the study recognized the importance of parking and access in the success of Downtown's economic development future and provided the following:

- Definition of the intended use and purpose of the parking system;
- Management strategies regarding the supply and enforcement of the parking policies;
- Procedures for monitoring parking use and responding to changes in demand; and
- Recommendations for maintaining the intended function of the overall system.

The 2014 Parking Study then focused on identifying current parking occupancy rates in Redmond, and exploring options for additional parking strategies. The project consultant worked with stakeholders and City staff and learned:

- 1) Redmond has an average of 68% peak hour occupancy rate;
- 2) Adjustments to the parking management program should happen if the occupancy on average begins to exceed 80%;
- 3) The City should continually evaluate and explore parking management options and may want to consider taking an even more active and expanded role in managing parking and growth is realized; and
- 4) Parking needs to be recognized as a community resource.

The strategies also supported City work to develop more on-street and public parking facilities over time to reduce reliance on off-street private parking lots and support implementation of Redmond's vision.

The Parking Strategies Project Final Report was completed on October 27, 2014. The stakeholder group recommended no changes to parking based on the findings of the report. On January 27, 2015, the City Council held a study session to review and discuss the report's recommendations.

- **Community, Businesses, and Property Owner Comments**

Staff frequently receives comments regarding parking. Primarily these reflect perceived demand and pre-existing land use patterns. Suburban development patterns that prioritized the use of the automobile are still present in the Downtown such as in zones east of 164th Avenue NE. However, the City's vision for a Downtown urban center prioritizes alternate modes of travel including pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented.

Community comments about parking seemingly reflect the transitions regarding Redmond's urban fabric that are underway. In general, people describe their interest in parking on-site or adjacent to individual businesses. Staff recognizes that people travel from outer neighborhoods to the Downtown, which is also reflected in comments describing the use of public parking. These comments range from how to use the Redmond Central Connector lot to how to locate additional long-term parking opportunities.

Staff also meets frequently with Downtown business owners regarding a variety of topics such as construction project updates, parking management programs, and incentives for travel modes alternative to single-occupant vehicles (SOV). Business owners describe

their interest for long-term employee parking and accessible and highly visible customer parking. Owners also comment on use of on-street parking such as for overnight and weekend use.

- **Council Requests and Direction**

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) staff meet annually with the City Council to provide an overview of parking conditions. This discussion includes parking supply and demand, management programs such as mitigation provisions for construction parking and capital improvement projects, and incentive programs such as the new “park once” promotion.

Staff met with the City Council on March 22, 2016 to provide the latest update. The Council’s requests and direction included:

- Maintaining the current direction of the TDM program;
- Considering expanded enforcement hours in the time-limited parking zones;
- Continuing management of construction projects impacts including parking for contractors and staging equipment; and
- Continuing marketing for parking resources such as fee-based, public parking partnerships with private businesses.

PREPARATION FOR JUNE 15 STUDY SESSION

Please review the background information provided in this memo and enclosed slides in advance of the June 15 meeting. Commissioners identified preliminary questions at your June 8, 2016 meeting. Please email additional questions to Kim Dietz at kdietz@redmond.gov by 8:00 am on Monday, June 13.

ATTACHMENT

A. Presentation Slides